



Mr & Mrs Abbott,
123, Downs Court Rd.,
Purley,
Surrey,

ENGLAND.

12/8/40.

Dear All,

So this is New York! (or as they say, "New-york"). We had to go to the quarantine post, at West Point, first of all. I have only had 3 hours sleep to-day, as we got there very early this morning. When I opened my port, I thought it was Auckland! It is very similar. Just before breakfast, we moved a bit further up and docked at New York. We are only here for a day or so. I have seen the Statue of Liberty, and "Manhattan City". This is where all the sky scrapers are. I have sketched both of them. Interesting? Its marvelous. But I wouldn't like to live here. I've got some American money (4 dollars to the pound). I shall go ashore tonight. All finger prints had to be taken, and certain other particulars. Once more I have been a clerical clerk. I think that just about sums up

today's events so far, so I will tell you how things have been going on the way out.

Soon after we left Scotland, in fact the day after, an order came through telling us we must have a continuous watch in the wireless room until further notice. This has meant 6 hours on ~~off~~ and 6 hours off and very little sleep. Boy! if I was being paid overtime! Another thing, why wasn't I a 4th engineer? £20 a month. One trip and you are 3rd. - £25 a month!! More than a senior sparks.

We had a week of fairly rough weather. The ship is "light" (no cargo) this time, and she has no rolling chocks, so she rolled like I don't know what. Honestly you could barely stand or sit unless you wedged yourself. Everything had to be put away in cupboards, and all drawers fixed. Believe me, ships and sea were rushing past alternately at a most alarming rate. Very often the horizon was at an angle of 40°-50°. It was fun. The new articles that one signs now are for 6 months, so unless something unusual happens I shall be on her next trip.

There is no bathroom, so if you want a bath you swill yourself down with a bucket of water - in your cabin. I tell you, it's great.

The skipper's a bit of a character. He always seems to be yelling, and has a temper like fire - but it's all bark and no bite. His one good point is that he is crazy about his wife and family, and never fails to tell us at meal times how glad I will be when we are going back, an

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how much he loves his wife and children. He has always been decent to me. He gave me photographs of his wife and two daughters to draw. He seems quite pleased and says he is going to send them to them. The reason how he found out that I did any drawing was because "Tich" the cabin boy, showed him two pictures (portraits) that I had done for my own amusement.

So far I have about three standing orders!

"Tich" is a good lad. He is my age. Very lively and quick. Very short, is Welsh (as everybody on board is), and does nothing but sing all day. He is always asking me what the time at home is.

The other day the sailors "dumped" the mincing machine. They said they weren't going to have any more bad meat minced, and sprinkled with onions to cover the taste. You see we have

Ice-box, so ^{4.} ~~will~~ are on salt beef and
anned stuff now. The skipper was in a
rage, and said he would get the
chap 6 months, fine him and make him by
a new one, if he found out who he was!

Ah! but it's a good life. No matter
what the ship is like, the elements are
always interesting.

I suppose I shall go to sleep
tonight under the shadow of the Statue
of Liberty, and Manhattan skyscrapers;
and now, as I want to have some
tea and get ashore now, I must say
goodbye for the present and all the
best. Give my love to all, tell them I am
well and safe. I shall write to Renée
and Tommy as soon as possible. So once
more goodbye,

Your very affectionate son & brother,
Leonard

P.S. Pretty big air raids, eh?